

Date of Hearing: May 8, 2019

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
Lorena Gonzalez, Chair  
AB 1511 (Bloom) – As Amended March 26, 2019

Policy Committee: Natural Resources

Vote: 11 - 0

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: No

Reimbursable: No

**SUMMARY:**

This bill replaces the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) with the State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) as the agency required to provide administrative services to the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission (Commission).

Additionally, this bill revises the Commission's purposes and goals to reflect its 2018 "Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program's Action Plan for the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan."

Lastly, this bill adds the SCC to an existing requirement to establish an MOU with the California Environmental Protection Agency, the Natural Resources Agency (NRA) and the Chair of the Bay Watershed Council to ensure the coordination of state programs affecting the Bay.

**FISCAL EFFECT:**

This bill will result in either no additional state costs for staff or cost savings depending on how the state decides to staff the Commission.

Under the first alternative, the SCC would require \$185,000 to hire one staff person.

Under the second alternative, the SCC would require \$451,000 per year to cover cost of two positions transferred from the State Water Board.

With either alternative, as part of the transfer of authorities, SCC anticipates costs associated with quarterly meeting support, including travel, responding to Public Records Act requests and about ¼ of an attorney's time to work with the Attorney General on litigation, for a total of \$150,000 annually.

**COMMENTS:**

**Rationale.** The Commission is a non-regulatory, locally based state agency charged with coordinating activities of federal, state, local and other entities to restore and enhance the Santa Monica Bay. The Commission is the state entity partner of the Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program, which is one of 28 national estuary programs established by the U.S. EPA.

The Commission is composed of the Watershed Advisory Council, the Governing Board, the Executive Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee. Together, the board and

committees serve as the Management Conference of the Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program.

When the Commission was first established in statute, its mission focused on water quality. Now the Commission is more focused on restoration projects and public access. Thus, moving the administrative duties from the Water Board to the SCC better aligns with the current activities and goals of the Commission.

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